

CATS ONLINE DEMO AREA OPEN FOR USE BY STUDENTS AND STAFF

Plans are underway for offering the CATS Online 2004 Assessment as an accommodation for eligible students with disabilities. This assessment accommodation is for students with print disabilities who have integrated use of text-to-speech technology into their instructional routines to access the general curriculum. One of the things learned from the 2003 Online Assessment is that both students and staff need to have sufficient opportunity to practice online assessment before taking the real test. Taking a test online is not the same as taking a test with pencil and paper. It requires practice to allow staff and students to know how to navigate between questions, how to use their text or screenreader to select and read the test, respond to multiple-choice and open response questions, etc. It is required that each student has experience with the format and operation of the CATS Online Assessment before he/she tries to take the real test in this format.

A CATS Online DEMO Area has been set up just for this purpose, where staff and students can practice using selected questions from the 1999 Released CATS test items. Being able to enter the CATS Online 2004 Assessment will require electronic verification that each student has spent time in the CATS Online Practice Area. This CATS Online DEMO area does not fulfill that requirement, but it does allow for familiarity with online assessment to be available to staff and students without having to wait until the required practice area opens in January of 2004. It is strongly recommended that both staff and students spend time in this demo area until **both** are comfortable with how to navigate pages and understand how to use their textreader or screenreader software to read and answer both multiple-choice and open response questions. Our experience has found that this supports successful participation on the real assessment in the spring.

Previewing DEMO Area

The CATS Online Demo Area can be accessed by going to the website listed below and selecting one or more of the grade level Login IDs.

(NOTE- Students entering the DEMO Area by using the student logins below will not result in the required tracking of Student Practice as needed to access the KCCT. [Information is forthcoming regarding the required practice for CATS Online for 2004.](#)

To see an example of what the online assessment will look like for students, go to the CATS Online Assessment website at <https://catsonline.ecollege.com/> to access the DEMO Area.

(NOTE: The DEMO Area may contain answers submitted by previous DEMO users. You can change their answers by clicking on different choices or by entering new text.) At the login screen, type in one of the following Login IDs:

Grade	LoginID
4	g04st2161
5	g05st9398
7	g07st9567
8	g08st4057
10	g10st7314
11	g11st6974
12	g12st1215

The sample grades are set up to reflect a variety of student accommodation profiles. This will help teachers see different views prior to setting individual profiles when entering student users for the real test. Accommodation profiles are set by the teacher based on individual student need consistent with IEPs or 504 Plans.

When you enter the CATS Online Assessment website, you will see the following choices:

Enter DEMO Area
Enter Assessment
Set Your Preferences
View Help
Leave CATS Online

Clicking on “Enter DEMO Area” will give you access to the demonstration questions. The “Enter Assessment” will take the students to the page where they would enter their Password to access the real assessment, but this will not be available until the actual assessment begins in spring of 2004. The “Set Your Preferences” area is where we recommend you and your students begin. This allows test settings to be changed to the font size or color based on student preference. The “View Help” section also should be visited to learn more about how to use the online assessment.

What is an “accessible” online assessment?

The CATS Online Assessment is an interactive website that has been created using the Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT), Form 1A (Form 1 for grade 12), in an "accessible" digital format. The questions and student expectations for this online assessment are the same as for all other students taking the test with pencil and paper. It is an "accessible" online assessment, because the text has been formatted for computerized reading by students, using their textreader (e.g., Wordsmith, Read & Write, eReader) or screenreader (i.e., JAWS) software. The students will use their mouse or keyboard to select the text they need to read, and the computer will provide the audio (via earphones). This way, the students can control navigation of the test questions and independently read and/or re-read at their own pace anything they cannot read without supports. Use of this accommodation still requires adult presence in the event a student has a need for support in use of the technology.

NOTE: Both students and support staff must have sufficient experience in classroom and online use of textreader or screenreader technology before attempting to use this means of participation in the KCCT. Supported software includes: Read and Write (5, 6, Gold or Mac), JAWS 3.7, eReader 2.0, or ZoomText.

Which Students are Eligible to take CATS Online?

Many Kentucky students with disabilities have required support from "human readers" as an accommodation to participate in the Kentucky Core Content Assessment (KCCCT). Now, as a result of technology advances, many of these students have begun using "text-to-speech" software (i.e., textreader or screenreader) to allow them to independently read materials in the classroom using computers. Those students who have primarily replaced the need for human reading supports with technology (i.e., textreader or screenreader) in the classroom setting, can consider the option of using this same technology to independently read the KCCCT online.

The students' teachers will need to be able to verify that this technology support is used by the students on a routine basis as their consistent means of accessing printed material and that this accommodation is listed in each student's Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan. This process also assumes that the student's instructional materials are being converted and or obtained in an accessible digital format to allow the student to have the ability to access his or her instructional materials on the computer.

In summary, all **three** of the following CATS Online Assessment Eligibility Criteria must be met to consider students for participation:

- 1) Student has an Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan that specifies the need for a "reader" as a classroom instructional and assessment accommodation, (i.e., student's IEP includes specific goals and objectives and specially designed instruction related to reading or describes assistive technology necessary for the student to access, be involved in, and progress in the general curriculum) and;
- 2) Student routinely requires and uses (e.g., daily to weekly) textreader or screenreader technology to access printed materials in classroom instruction and assessment, and;
- 3) Student has entered and used the CATS Online Practice Area to develop familiarity with online assessment operations and use of his or her hardware and software.

NOTE: Use of the CATS Online Assessment accommodation is only to be used by students who meet the eligibility criteria. Students who prefer to use adult support to "read" the KCCCT as specified in their IEP will continue with this accommodation and **will not** be expected to utilize the CATS Online Assessment Tool.